

NSC REVIEW
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CI Group Discussion of Charter

Gen. Taylor: We should consider two aspects. Is the charter sufficient and, if so, are we carrying it out in the best way. His conclusion is that we have a pretty good charter now. He does not think that the committee should be overloaded. (He referred here to paragraph 1 of Mr. Johnson's memo.) A question could be raised here whether all country team operations and countries assigned to the CI Group should come under it. He does not know if this is the best solution or not.

Gilpatrick: Agrees with Taylor that the charter is all right, but the Group is not following through. There are no indicators of progress and the Group can't get a feel of what is really being accomplished. He would like to see the ambassador in the countries under the cognizance of the Group give a periodic, probably monthly, appreciation of the real situation. This would be only a page or two, but would indicate clearly what progress is being made. The Group gets plenty of papers now but not the right kind.

Taylor: The whole Group ought to make trips to the critical areas and talk to the people on the spot. (This was later agreed to by a number of people, including the AG.)

A.G.: Gilpatrick's comment is the heart of the problem. The President thinks the Group is watching progress and keeping an eye on problems in critical countries, for example Brazil and Colombia, which are not now being looked at by the Group because there is no counterinsurgency problem as such. The Group is now in the second stage of its development; it has assured that a number of programs have gotten underway, and now should probably do something additional. Monitoring could be done at a lower level.

He would like to see the Group operate like the Executive Committee and perhaps take an overall look at one country each week, e.g., Brazil. The Group provides the only forum where this could be done. State or CIA report from time to time that certain countries or areas may be potential trouble spots. The Group should then look at these, figure out solutions and report to the President. Emphasis should be on anticipating trouble.

Bell: To what extent are other committees doing the type of job mentioned by the A.G. - for example the LAPC. In other words, is it necessary for this Group to move into a field that might be adequately covered. He isn't sure.

SECRET

- 2 -

Dungan: The LAPC is doing an anticipating job, even though not perfectly. It is not doing enough on specialized programs, such as police.

McCone: There are a great many committees such as LAPC, Cottrell's new group, the SEA Task Force, etc. These seem to be largely un-coordinated among themselves; the same is true of the inspection teams. We should consider complete integration of all of these groups. Although each agency is represented on all of them, the principal is only informed second-hand in most cases. The CI Group will either become less active or it will become a major arm of the government.

Bundy: If the Group develops in this way, it would simply interpose another level between the troops and the President. Why do this? We should not take away responsibility from the State Department or an interagency task force, or whoever else is responsible for an area. If two different groups are made "it", this doesn't advance the problem.

Forrestal: He is worried about separating the consideration of internal defense from other activities in a country. If the CI Group became "it" then in selected countries it could manage everything. He concedes, however, that this would interpose another level.

Taylor: This committee is not in the command channel. It can sit on the sidelines and comment on how things are going, thus not necessarily interposing another level.

(Bundy left the meeting at this point.)

Wilson: He and Murrow would like to see the Group continue, but expand "somewhat." This would be essentially in terms of doing more of the same, not becoming a command echelon.

Bell: Such a Group could take on a few countries for very special high-level attention, but leave other countries to existing mechanisms, for example LAPC. Alternatively, it can simply continue monitoring as it is now doing.

A.G.: The function of the Group should be one of inspection, to make sure programs are not bogging down because of interagency disagreements, etc. The Group should look at these situations, straighten them out, and report to the President. This would be beyond the strictly counterinsurgency aspects. Specific countries should be assigned for this purpose. This would not remove operational responsibility from anyone, nor interpose another layer. CI has become primarily a monitoring problem now; it is time to apply the talents of this Group to other countries which do not necessarily have a CI problem. Emphasis should be on anticipating problems.

SECRET

- 3 -

Bell: He is afraid of the word "supervisory." This implies that this Group is "it" for operations, and this is not desirable.

Dungan: If the Group were really to take on this type of surveillance it would need a small independent staff. General Taylor's staff, before he moved to the Pentagon, served this purpose. (Forrestal also expanded on this.)

Taylor: All the operating departments and agencies have their own ways of checking on critical situations abroad. The President does not have this facility, except for this kind of group.

Is not the proposition that the charter of the Group should be widened to permit it to look at trouble spots in certain areas, beyond the CI situation - at the direction of the President. The function would be one of inspection. The Group's interests would broaden out functionally, but probably would be more selective as to countries.

A.G.: This would be the poor man's executive committee.

Bell: He does not see any real problem of "layering."

Johnson: He is worried about how things would work if the Group takes over everything in a country. What would relations of this Group be to existing mechanisms dealing with these countries.

Taylor: The A.G. should recast NSAM 124 and circulate it for comment. (The A.G. agreed.)

Such a group would require a fulltime chairman with some staff.

Dungan: Is it feasible for Bundy to be chairman, supported by a small staff - since t is new look would cut across his bows? (Gen. Taylor and others pointed out that this possibility had been considered last fall, but that Mr. Bundy did not have enough time to devote to this.)

Johnson: Agrees a fulltime chairman could be useful. He should work under Bundy's guidance.

Taylor: Bundy is in the command channel as immediate staff officer to the President. This Group would sit outside the command channel with the function of seeing how we are doing.